



Arolygiaeth Ei Fawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**Gorseinon Primary School**

**40 Brynawel Road  
Gorseinon  
Swansea  
SA4 4UX**

**Date of inspection: November 2022**

**by**

**Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education  
and Training in Wales**

## About Gorseinon Primary School

Name of provider	Gorseinon Primary School
Local authority	City and County of Swansea
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	N/A
Number of pupils on roll	302
Pupils of statutory school age	229
Number in nursery classes	49
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in Primary is 23.0%)	31.3%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Primary is 16.1%)	30.1%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	3.9%
Date of headteacher appointment	September 2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	10/10/2014
Start date of inspection	28/11/2022

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different to those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website: [mylocalschool.gov.wales](https://mylocalschool.gov.wales)

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

## Overview

Gorseinon Primary School is a caring, nurturing school that places a high priority on the well-being of its pupils. As a result, most pupils speak confidently about the pride they have in their school, they know that all staff care for them and trust that they will always help and support them. Many pupils make appropriate overall progress from their starting points. Most pupils make good progress in a few aspects of their learning including developing their reading skills and their ability to speak Welsh. However, pupil progress in developing their writing, numeracy and digital skills is not always as strong as it should be.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are a strength of the school. Most listen well to instructions and apply themselves to their learning. They work together diligently on tasks and respond positively to staff. The care, support and guidance provided across the school community is valuable and supports pupils to engage positively with school life and experiences. Whole school projects such as enterprise week provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their awareness of the world of work. However, the school's curriculum and the delivery of it do not always ensure that pupils build on their learning experiences or develop aspects of their skills well enough as they move through the school. In a few areas of learning, teachers have strong subject knowledge and use effective questioning strategies to probe pupils' understanding and extend their learning. Pupils are not always given enough opportunities to make choices about how and what they learn.

Leaders have a clear vision for the well-being of all pupils. However, although they have identified relevant areas for improvement this year, they have generally been slow in addressing shortcomings in teaching and learning. Leaders have not developed or implemented robust processes to support evaluation and improvement.

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Improve strategic leadership systems, including arrangements for the performance management of staff and evaluation and improvement processes
- R2 Ensure that teaching and the school's curriculum support pupils to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding progressively

## **What happens next**

The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will work with the local authority to review the school's progress.

## Main evaluation

### Learning

A majority of pupils enter school with skills at a level expected for their age. Overall, many pupils at Gorseinon Primary School, including those with additional learning (ALN) and those that are eligible for free school meals, make appropriate progress from these starting points during their time at the school.

Most pupils' speaking and listening skills develop well from an early age. Pupils in nursery listen well to instructions and follow them purposefully. By the time they reach Year 1, they learn new vocabulary through meaningful activities such as investigations to find out which wrapping paper would protect a present for baby Jesus from getting wet. In Year 2, pupils use their speaking and listening skills effectively to relate sensitively to one another and praise their peers for doing something well. Most older pupils work well collaboratively, listening to each other attentively and responding to the contribution of others. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils discuss challenging topics, such as climate change maturely.

The youngest pupils begin their reading journey listening to sounds and repeating, them. They develop a secure understanding of the relationship between letters and sounds. By Year 2, most pupils draw on an increasing range of reading skills, such as reasoning to work out meaning. Most pupils in the older classes read fluently and use their reading skills appropriately to access the curriculum.

Overall, pupils' development as writers is variable. By Year 2, many pupils develop their writing skills well, using simple strategies to spell simple words correctly. Most pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 make sound progress in developing their punctuation and grammar. In a few instances, pupils develop their ability to write for a specific purpose well through a series of planned lessons that culminates in a piece of extended writing. However, where teaching is less effective, pupils do not have a good enough understanding of different text types and do not write at length often enough.

Most pupils throughout the school gain a good understanding of number. By the time they reach Year 2, they are confident in working with numbers up to 100 and represent their findings from a science experiment using bar charts. Most pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 develop their estimation skills well, estimating the distance from one country to another with increasing accuracy. Many pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 become competent with basic number skills, working with numbers up to 1,000,000. However, although many pupils have a sound grasp of mathematical concepts, they do not use this understanding to apply their skills to a suitable standard or regularly enough in other areas of the curriculum.

Most younger pupils make strong progress in their ability to speak Welsh. They develop a good range of vocabulary and are beginning to respond to questions, recalling previously learnt sentence patterns. Most pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 continue to acquire new vocabulary and, by Year 5 and Year 6, most pupils can extend their sentences and hold a simple conversation on a range of topics using the past and present tense.

Many pupils in the school have basic digital skills. Younger pupils use tablets to play simple games and take photographs and pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 create posters and pictograms relating to their topic. Pupils in Year 6 create basic presentations and charts to support their topic work. However, overall, the range of pupils' skills is limited and they do not use the skills that they have well enough to enhance their learning across the curriculum.

Many pupils develop their thinking skills appropriately. Younger pupils work hard at tasks that require thought and explain their thinking suitably. Older pupils are beginning to discuss more complex issues intelligently, such as "The Big Bang Theory." However, their skills in planning, executing and evaluating their work are underdeveloped.

Most younger pupils make good progress in developing their creative and artistic skills, for example, pupils in reception and Year 1 create memory boxes to keep things that are special to them and paint Rangoli patterns to celebrate Divali. Further up the school, these skills are less well developed.

### **Well-being and attitudes to learning**

Nearly all pupils feel happy at school and talk enthusiastically about their learning experiences. Most pupils are proud to be members of the school community and are respectful to each other and adults. Across the school, most pupils have positive relationships with staff, feel valued and believe that their voices and opinions are heard, particularly in relation to termly topics.

Nearly all pupils behave very well. They walk around school calmly and hold doors open for each other and adults. Generally, most pupils develop positive attitudes to learning and demonstrate sustained engagement in lessons. Most pupils work together successfully in pairs and groups but as pupils move through the school, they become too reliant on teacher support and opportunities to develop their independence and resilience are therefore limited.

Most pupils show enterprise and creativity well when they have the opportunity, for example in the way the younger pupils approach and explore problem solving. In the Year 1 and Year 2 classes, pupils investigate the best reflective material to use for designing bee shaped reflectors that will keep them safe in the dark. As part of their topic, the reflectors are then sold to pupils in the school.

Many pupils show a willingness to undertake leadership roles, such as the school council and Criw Cymraeg. They take their duties seriously and wear their badges with pride. However, as these groups have only recently started, their influence is at an early stage of development.

Pupils play together enthusiastically at break times and lunch times and staff instigate games to play with them, which has a positive impact on behaviour outside. Pupils enjoy the space that they now have in their new school and there are a good range of activities to keep pupils fit and active. There are a wide variety of after-school clubs on offer for children from Year 3 onwards and they are well attended. These include rugby, chess, singing and football clubs.

Pupils feel safe at the school. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe online and know who to approach for advice if anything is worrying them. Nearly all pupils know how to stay healthy by eating and drinking sensibly. They also understand the importance of exercise and the recently introduced physical education scheme is having a positive effect on the attitudes and enjoyment of these lessons.

## **Teaching and learning experiences**

There is a caring and welcoming ethos throughout school and this helps create a positive and purposeful learning environment. Staff manage pupils' behaviour well and as a result most pupils engage positively in their learning. Teachers deploy support staff appropriately to assist the development of pupils' skills and well-being.

Curriculum design is at the early stages of development. Staff are beginning to focus on a range of interesting topics across the areas of learning and experience. They are beginning to take account of the four purposes and thinking about how they can make learning relevant and interesting for pupils. For example, younger pupils enjoy being scientists and making lava lamps to develop their investigative skills and older pupils understand the negative effects of pollution on the oceans. This supports them in becoming ethically informed citizens.

Provision to develop pupils' speaking, listening and reading skills is generally successful across the school. The majority of staff are good language role models for pupils in both English and Welsh. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' speaking skills in both English and Welsh and this is reflected in the progress that pupils make.

The school's provision to develop pupils' writing, numeracy and digital skills is too variable overall. In a few instances, teachers develop pupils' writing skills effectively through a structured sequence of lessons. Teachers generally ensure that pupils develop an appropriate understanding of mathematical concepts but do not provide opportunities for pupils to apply this learning in their work across the curriculum. Teachers provide a few useful opportunities for pupils to use basic digital skills but they do not ensure that pupils develop the full range of digital skills.

The school is beginning to implement the principles for the Curriculum for Wales by providing a few authentic, real-life learning experiences. For example, pupils across the school take part in an exciting enterprise project and older pupils sell their products at a stall in Castle Gardens, Swansea.

In the younger classes, teachers maximise the use of outdoor spaces to provide stimulating and challenging activities for the pupils. This has a positive effect on their communication, physical and problem-solving skills. For instance, the youngest pupils develop skills in collaborating as they work together to build a brick tower taller than themselves. However, teachers in the classes for older pupils do not make the most of use the extensive grounds to plan purposeful learning activities.

The school supports pupils' personal and social development well. Older pupils have a clear understanding of how to stay safe online and of how bullying can impact on mental and physical health and well-being. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to

develop their knowledge of the history and culture of their local area and Wales. They also learn about inspirational people across the world. For example, older pupils celebrate the lives of individuals such as Rosa Parks and Ruby Bridges as part of their work learning about significant people.

Most teachers provide valuable verbal feedback to pupils during lessons which supports pupils to move forward appropriately in their learning. They use good questioning techniques and plenary session to assess how well groups of pupils are progressing. However, opportunities for pupils to respond to feedback and reflect on their own learning are inconsistent. As a result, many older pupils are unclear about their next steps.

There are a broad range of engaging extra-curricular activities that enrich pupils' experiences, including chess, football and creative arts club.

### **Care, support and guidance**

The quality of the care, support and guidance of the pupils is a strength of the school. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong and they show a high level of respect and appreciation for each other. Pupils co-operate and collaborate well together and show compassion and empathy during their interactions. As a result, nearly all pupils are proud of their school and its ethos.

Staff know the children well and take time to understand their individual needs. Provision for children with ALN is appropriate, although systems for tracking and monitoring progress are in the early stages of development. Staff work together to ensure that pupils with educational, emotional, social or health needs receive the provision and intervention that suits them best. This provision has a positive impact on pupils' well-being.

Thoughtful and knowledgeable support staff deliver a range of support programmes to enhance the development of pupils' academic and emotional skills. The school has given appropriate priority to ALN reform and liaises well with external agencies. Parents value their relationship with the school and appreciate the parent consultations and annual reports, as well as the support and guidance given on an individual basis.

The school provides worthwhile experiences to develop their understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues during classroom activities, assemblies and through educational visits. For example, members of the Friends of St Catherine's and St. David's group attend assemblies every week to deliver messages of kindness and hope. The school ensures that pupils develop a purposeful understanding of their identity, heritage and culture, and how they relate to the local community and the wider world. For example, pupils learn about the heritage and culture of families that have moved into the local area and about how and why they chose to live in Wales.

The school promotes the celebration of cultural diversity through the curriculum. For example, younger pupils draw Rangoli patterns to celebrate Divali and older pupils celebrate Black History month through their study of influential artists such as Bob Marley.

The wide range of after school sporting activities help pupils develop their physical skills well, and the weekly craft club helps encourage creativity. The school organises a number of educational visits throughout the year in order to enhance learning, for example, Year 3 and Year 4 pupils visit Techniquet as part of their science topic. Older pupils also benefit from residential visits to outdoor learning centres during the spring and summer terms. Pupils value the opportunity to take on leadership roles, however, the recently established school council has yet to influence or impact on school life significantly. Pupils would welcome more opportunities to further develop their role as leaders. Pupils understand the importance of healthy eating and drinking and this had been developed through the curriculum. For example, Year 4 discuss a healthy, balanced diet.

The school has appropriate arrangements to monitor pupils' attendance. This includes daily monitoring, regular communication with parents and follow-up work where necessary.

Staff have pupils' well-being and safety at heart. The safeguarding culture is robust, and all staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and know who to speak to if they have a safeguarding concern about a pupil. There is effective provision to support pupils to keep themselves safe when working online. The school's arrangements to keep pupils safe meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

## **Leadership and management**

Leaders ensure that the school provides a caring environment. They promote a positive overall safeguarding culture and focus well on supporting the well-being of pupils. Leaders are committed to helping new pupils settle happily into life at the school. This is important as pupil numbers have increased recently since moving into a new school building.

The headteacher and his team have worked with a range of stakeholders to establish a suitable vision to create a supportive environment where pupils feel respected and safe. However, there is not yet a clear strategic vision for the Curriculum for Wales or for teaching and learning in general that is understood by all staff. Leaders have not always communicated high enough expectations in relation to the progress that pupils make, particularly in the development and use of important skills. In a few instances, leaders have not identified shortcomings in important aspects of the school's work. This has limited their capacity to focus school improvement work on the areas that need it most.

Recently, the school has extended the senior leadership team to include two teaching and learning responsibility post holders. However, roles and responsibilities within this new management structure are not yet clear. As a result, distributed leadership is not effective as it could be. Leaders do not always hold staff to account well enough due to weak performance management systems.

The school has made appropriate progress in implementing ALN reform and is beginning to implement the Curriculum for Wales. For example, cluster staff are working together to develop a shared approach to teaching aspects of the Curriculum for Wales, such as the Humanities area of learning and experience. They have also

forged links with schools outside the cluster and, as a result, introduced curriculum changes for physical education, which are having a positive impact on pupil enjoyment and engagement in physical activity. Leaders have begun to undertake a suitable programme of activities to monitor and evaluate the school's work. This includes considering an appropriate range of first-hand evidence such as looking at pupils' work and listening to pupils' views. Staff do not formally monitor or evaluate their area of responsibility, which means that their contributions towards the school's improvement journey are limited.

The school provides a suitable range of professional learning for staff that focuses on improving well-being, teaching and learning. For example, leaders have provided support to help staff plan purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh speaking skills in formal and informal situations. This has improved staff and pupil confidence in speaking Welsh. Leaders have recently introduced additional support to help staff to teach aspects of the curriculum more effectively but it is too early to see the impact of this support on pupils' outcomes.

The governing body are supportive of the school. With the recent addition of new members, they have reviewed their strengths and expertise, and allocated responsibilities accordingly. They discharge aspects of their duties appropriately, for example by ensuring that the school meets the requirements for healthy eating and drinking. The headteacher provides regular reports and keeps them informed about aspects such as pupils' well-being, safeguarding, staffing, visits and the school's premises. However, as evaluation and improvement processes lack rigour, governors do not have accurate enough information about important aspects, such as pupil progress and curriculum delivery. Therefore, they are not able challenge the school well enough about these important aspects of its work.

Leaders and governors manage finances appropriately and review spending regularly. Leaders use the pupil development grant appropriately to fund support for vulnerable pupils but do not evaluate the difference that this expenditure makes to disadvantaged pupils. Overall, leaders do not monitor the impact of their spending on school improvement sufficiently to ensure that it leads to improved outcomes for pupils.

## Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carer and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents/carers to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of classes, including learning support groups and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' well-being, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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